

# Talkin'



# Madison County

# Transportation

November 2004

## The Latest On Route 72 Improvements

Improvements to Route 72 in Madison and Bollinger Counties continue to move forward.

MoDOT plans to purchase right-of-way this winter for early phases of improvement. Those include replacing the Castor River Bridge and widening and resurfacing from Route OO

to just under a half-mile east of the Castor River.

While the Route 72 improvements

are welcomed by most drivers, they will result in several properties being affected.

MoDOT will purchase new right-of-way and/or temporary construction easements beginning this winter through next year from about 125 property owners.

"That's a lot of property owners," says Project Manager Tim Richmond. "We'll be very busy, but we'll always be available to answer

questions and explain the process."

MoDOT needs permission from property owners to conduct archaeological field tests. If you've not responded to earlier notices, we plan to send out a reminder soon.

Survey crews will be surveying later this month through the winter from east of the Castor River to just west of Route 51.

Public meetings are planned for sometime next year for improvements from Route 51 to Cape Girardeau County.



## Why Does MoDOT Do That?

*We know, you see things and wonder 'why MoDOT would do that' and 'isn't that a waste of money?' In this column, we'll be telling you the method behind what seems to be madness to keep you informed of how your tax dollars are being spent and why we do that.*

Did you know there are two types of road work? Construction and maintenance. Construction is building roads, making major improvements and replacing bridges. Maintenance is taking care of our roads and bridges and making repairs.

Here's how Missouri's road work works. MoDOT crews, who are state employees, maintain our transportation system daily. They mow, patch potholes, make concrete repairs and many other maintenance duties.

When major projects are constructed, MoDOT hires a contractor. After a project's planning and design process is complete, MoDOT asks contractors for bids. The Missouri

Highways and Transportation Commission reviews all bids and usually awards it to the lowest bidder.

MoDOT sets a timeframe for the contractor to have the project completed. The department may also set other guidelines such as working hours to help minimize impacts to traffic. Once the contractor begins work, the contractor controls the schedule. MoDOT tells the contractor how much time is allowed to build the project. Sometimes a calendar date for completion is given and sometimes a set number of working days. Contracts are extended when we ask the contractor to perform extra work, or there are special circumstances beyond the contractor's control. If the contractor does not finish the work within the time given in the contract, he is assessed liquidated damages.

When a contractor is hired, all

employees working on the project are the contractor's workers; however, MoDOT has inspectors onsite to make sure the contractor uses materials and practices that meet our standards.

So why, if MoDOT has employees who work on the road, would we hire others to do work as well? Resources. It takes a lot of people to maintain 32,000 miles of roads and the property along the roadway. MoDOT would have to hire many more people to be able to construct projects. It just isn't feasible or efficient when there are companies out there who can do the work.

One example is guardrail repair. Contractors have specialized equipment to repair guardrail that MoDOT does not. Plus, it allows our forces to stay focused on the road work. The contract helps us to get the repairs made more quickly and not have to change maintenance schedules to fix the damage.

# Everything You Need To Know About Snow

As highway construction season comes to an end, the Missouri Department of Transportation snow removal team is preparing for the cold and wet weather that is an inevitable part of every Missouri winter.

It's difficult to predict when the first snow will fall, and how much snow the winter will bring, but in six of the last 10 years, the first snow of the season fell in November with the greatest amount measuring nearly three inches in 1997.

"We hope for a mild winter," says Operations Engineer Mike Helpingstine. "But we'll prepare for severe weather and the long hours and grueling schedule that will come with that."

Materials, equipment and well-trained employees must be in place to be prepared for winter. Helpingstine says this year MoDOT is out front on all three.



All areas will be stocked with snow-removal materials, and approximately 1,800 vehicles will be ready to plow snow by early November. MoDOT spends about \$30 million a year on labor, materials and equipment for snow and ice removal. Approximately 1,800 vehicles are ready to improve driving conditions as soon as possible, and about 300,000 tons of salt are on hand to help melt snow and ice.



"The best advice for motorists is to stay safe at home during snowstorms," Helpingstine says. "If you need to drive, give snowplows plenty of room and don't pass them. Always stay alert and drive cautiously, especially during the winter season."

MoDOT plows roads as often as necessary to keep them open. Please be careful this winter as you travel and patient as we work to keep your travel safe.

## Priority Routes

MoDOT prioritizes all roads to quickly assist the largest number of travelers. Roads with the highest traffic volumes are treated and cleared first. Here are the priority routes in Southeast Missouri:

Roadways receiving first priority in the Southeast Missouri region include Interstates 55, 57 and 155 along with Routes 60, 67, 412, 160 and portions of 51 and 74.

Second priority roadways include Routes 8, 25, 32, 34, 47, 49, 51, 53, 61, 62, 72, 74, 75, 77, 80, 91, 102, 105, 108, 114, 142, 143, 153, 158, 162, 164, 177 and heavily traveled lettered routes.

Routes 144 and 172 along with lesser-traveled lettered routes, outer roads and service roads are MoDOT's third priority.

An emergency situation where roads need to be cleared to provide emergency equipment access takes temporary precedence over the standard priority route processes. Requests for such emergency service must be channeled through a law enforcement agency or through MoDOT's Customer Service Center at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636).

## For Questions

Information on road conditions across the state, safe-traveling tips and a diagram on driveway-clearing techniques are all available at [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org), under the traveler information heading. Information is also available by calling MoDOT's Customer Service Centers toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT. (1-888-275-6636). Recorded road-condition information is available through the state's toll-free road conditions number, 1-800-222-6400.



## Driveway & Plow Problems

It's frustrating when you finish clearing your driveway only to have one of our plows come by and fill it back in.

There is an easy way to prevent that inconvenience from happening. When clearing your driveway, snow at the end of the drive should be shoveled in the direction of traffic.

"If you shovel your drive and put it to the left of your entrance when our plows come through to clear the roadway, it will be pushed back into your drive," Helpingstine said.

MoDOT asks people to make an

open area along the shoulder at the entrance to the drive and place the snow on the shoulder in the direction of traffic so plow blades will push a limited amount into driveway entrances.

